



# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

## FIRE DEPARTMENT

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(323) 881-2401

P. MICHAEL FREEMAN  
FIRE CHIEF  
FORESTER & FIRE WARDEN

May 31, 2007

TO: EACH SUPERVISOR

FROM: P. MICHAEL FREEMAN

### CONTRACT AIR PROGRAM

Due to historic low fuel moisture levels and lack of significant rainfall that will likely result in an active and dangerous fire season, the Department is finalizing its plans for the 2007 Contract Aircraft Program. As directed by your Board on Tuesday, May 15, 2007, we have investigated the possibility of bringing the SuperScooper planes to Los Angeles County in June 2007 due to the extreme risk of fire expected this year.

### Department Aircraft

During fire weather and fuel conditions, the Department staffs four helicopters from our fleet of Type I (Sikorsky Firehawk) and Type II (Bell 412) helicopters.

Three helicopters are staffed as air squads with the ability to respond to either EMS or fire calls. Their standby locations are Fire Station 64 in San Dimas, Camp 8 in Malibu, and Fire Station 129 in Lancaster. The helicopter on standby at Camp 8 will respond with a fly crew when dispatched to fire incidents. The fourth helicopter, usually a Sikorsky Firehawk, is staffed as a dedicated fire ship. The fire ship will respond to all brush fires from its standby location in Santa Clarita. On July 1, 2007, the fourth helicopter will be staffed on a daily basis until the end of fire season.

Given the anticipated fire season, two Bell 412 helicopters ready for sale will be kept through this year. This will increase the number of available helicopters for additional staffing purposes when fire weather conditions dictate.

SERVING THE UNINCORPORATED AREAS OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY AND THE CITIES OF:

AGOURA HILLS  
ARTESIA  
AZUSA  
BALDWIN PARK  
BELL  
BELL GARDENS  
BELLFLOWER  
BRADBURY

CALABASAS  
CARSON  
CERRITOS  
CLAREMONT  
COMMERCE  
COVINA  
CUDAHY

DIAMOND BAR  
DUARTE  
EL MONTE  
GARDENA  
GLENORA  
HAWAIIAN GARDENS  
HAWTHORNE

HIDDEN HILLS  
HUNTINGTON PARK  
INDUSTRY  
INGLEWOOD  
IRVINDALE  
LA CANADA FLINTRIDGE  
LA HABRA

LA MIRADA  
LA PUENTE  
LAKEWOOD  
LANCASTER  
LAWDALE  
LOMITA  
LYNWOOD

MALIBU  
MAYWOOD  
NORWALK  
PALMDALE  
PALOS VERDES ESTATES  
PARAMOUNT  
PICO RIVERA

POMONA  
RANCHO PALOS VERDES  
ROLLING HILLS  
ROLLING HILLS ESTATES  
ROSEMEAD  
SAN DIMAS  
SANTA CLARITA

SIGNAL HILL  
SOUTH EL MONTE  
SOUTH GATE  
TEMPLE CITY  
WALNUT  
WEST HOLLYWOOD  
WESTLAKE VILLAGE  
WHITTIER

Each Supervisor  
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### **CL-415 SuperScoopers**

The Department has contacted the Government of Quebec to determine if the two CL-415 SuperScoop firefighting aircraft can be leased in June 2007 instead of October 2007 due to the extreme fire risk this year. Unfortunately, they are unable to commit to this early assignment due to prior commitments to the fire season in Canada. At this point, the earliest possible arrival date for the SuperScoopers is September 1, 2007. The District will contact Quebec again in early July 2007 to see if the assignment date can be changed to the beginning or middle of August 2007. We have also contacted the Government of Ontario to inquire about additional SuperScoopers. The availability of those aircraft is also in question due to the current fire season in Ontario. I will keep your Board apprised as we continue to attempt to get these important firefighting assets here as early as possible.

### **Heli-tankers**

We have also inquired as to the availability of a Type I helicopter also referred to as a heli-tanker. Private helicopter contractors are currently finalizing their contracts for the upcoming fire season. We are pursuing an exclusive use contract that will supplement our SuperScoop coverage.

Finally, we contacted the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) to assess their contingency plan regarding contract aircraft agreements. Beginning July 1, 2007, LAFD will have a Type-I heli-tanker under a 170-day exclusive-use contract. As in the past, our helicopter-use agreement with LAFD will allow access to this resource. In addition, we are exploring the possibility of securing an additional heli-tanker to cost-share with LAFD. My staff is currently working with them to address regional options and agreement possibilities.

Should you have any questions or need additional information, you may reach me at (323) 881-2401.

PMF:acm

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